A1

as having a substantially spherical shape, that is due to the fact that this particular tire casing 12 and rim 14 together form a void space with a substantially circular cross-section. If the rim 14 were substantially wider than the height of the tire casing, or if the height of the tire casing were substantially taller than the width of the rim, then the balls 18 preferably would have a more elliptical shape. Also, a more elliptical shape may be desirable in order to fit the desired number of balls into the tire, as will be explained later. The balls 18 preferably are made of a material that does not stretch significantly, so the surface area of the ball does not increase appreciably as the internal pressure of the gas inside the ball increases.

Amend the paragraph beginning on line 15 of page 8 as follows:

A2

Figure 4 shows a section through the assembly 10 of Figure 3. The rim 14 has a substantially inverted U-shaped cross-section and defines left and right recesses 32. The left and right edges 34 of the standard tire 12 have embedded cords 36, and these edges 34 with embedded cords 36 are received in the recesses 32 and seal against the internal surface of the recesses 32 in the rim 14. This figure also shows that the ball 18 has its own individual valve 38, which permits the ball 18 to be inflated to a desired pressure so that the gas pressure inside the ball is greater than the ambient gas pressure acting on the outside of the ball in order to maintain the ball in an inflated state. A thin-walled ball such as this ball 18 relies on this difference between the internal gas pressure and the ambient gas pressure in order to maintain a rounded, inflated shape and would collapse if the internal and external pressures were the same, while a thick-

walled ball relies on the stiffness of the material of the ball to provide support to the ball.

A2

Amend the paragraph beginning on line 1 of page 9 as follows:

Figure 6 shows the standard tire valve 20, which extends through the rim 14 and permits pressurized gas to be inserted between the tire 12 and the rim 14. ~~I~~

A3

Amend the paragraph beginning on line 15 of page 12 as follows:

A4

An alternative embodiment is shown in Figure 5. In that embodiment, the assembly is the same as in the first embodiment, except that an inner tube 60 has been inserted between the balls 18 and the rim 14. The balls 18 still have a diameter that spans the space between the tire and the rim, so that there is only a single layer of balls 18. In this embodiment, the valve 20 goes through the rim 14 and into the interior of the tube 60. The inner tube 60 is a standard inner tube, having a toroidal shape. This results in a hybrid-type of tire assembly. If the pressure inside the tube 60 is low, the assembly functions in the same manner as the first embodiment, as if the tube were not present. As the pressure of the tube 60 is increased, the tire assembly acquires a more rigid effect. The tube 60 allows external adjustment for changes in load, terrain, or altitude.